

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 DOTE-00 USIA-06 BIB-01 CU-02

AID-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 /036 W

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P R 030945Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3322

USDOC PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

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DAKAR FOR USIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP BTRA MR

SUBJECT: MAURITANIAN ROAD MINISTER TO VISIT US

1. MAURITANIA'S MINISTER CHARGED WITH BUILDING OF NOUAKCHOTT-NEMA ROAD, HASNI OULD DIDI, PLANS TO ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON FEBRUARY 8 FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE WEEK STAY IN US. OULD DIDI WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY MOHAMED ABDELLAHI OULD EL BANHIR, ENGINEER IN CHARGE OF MAURITANIA'S ROAD DEPARTMENT, AND ABDERRAHMANE OULDDADDAH, AMERICAN-EDUCATED EMPLOYEE OF WESERN ENTERPRISES INC.

2. MAIN PURPOSE OF VISIT IS TO MAKE CONTACT WITH AMERICAN MANUFACTURERS OF ROAD BUILDING EQUIPMENT. IN THIS CONNECTION, DELEGATION HOPES TO VISIT CHICAGO CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT EXPOSITION AND ROAD SHOW (CONEXPO) WHICH TAKES PLACE FEBRUARY 9-14.

3. OULD DIDI, FORMERLY GOVERNOR OF 8TH REGION, WAS ONLY RECENTLY NAMED MINISTER OF ROADS NEWLY CREATED PORTFOLIO. CONSTRUCTION OF THIS 1400 KILOMETER ROAD ACROSS DESERT FROM NOUAKCHOTT TO NEMA IS HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT IN MAURITANIA, PRIMARILY FOR POLITICAL REASONS. ALTHOUGH FINANCING HAS NOT YET BEEN FULLY SUBSCRIBED, GIRM SAYS IT HAS GRANT OR SOFT-LOAN COMMITMENTS FROM SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, AND UNITED ARAB EMIRATES FOR NEARLY HALF OF PROJECT. FRENCH AND GERMANS HAVE ALSO BEEN APPROACHED FOR ASSISTANCE.

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ORIGINAL BIDS BY FRENCH CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES WERE REJECTED AS TOO

HIGH AND GIRM IS NOW LOOKING FOR CHEAPER WAY TO BUILD ROAD. ONE IDEA IS TO INVESTIGATE DIRECT PURCHASE OF CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT (THUS OULD DIDI'S TRIP) IN CONJUNCTION WITH EXPARTRIAE TECHNICAL SUPPORT ON CONTRACT BASIS.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: THIS VISIT COULD LEAD TO SUBSTANTIAL SALE OF AMERICAN ROAD BUILDING EQUIPMENT TO GIRM. URGE STATE AND COMMECE MAKE VERY EFFORT, WORKING WITH MAURITANIAN AMBASSADOR OULD ABDALLAH, TO FACILITATE TRIP. WE HAVE SUGGESTED THAT OULD DIDI CALL ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BLAKE AND AF/W (BISHOP MET OULD DIDI DURING RECENT VISIT TO MAURITANIA). ALSO RECOMMEND PARTIAL CU GRANT FOR PER DIEM AND DOMESTIC TRAVEL FOR BOTH OULD DIDI AND OULD EL BAHD. (AS OULD DADDAH IS ON PAYROLL OF US COMPANY, HE MAY NOT QUALIFY). FINALLY, IN VIEW OF PAUCITY OF VISITS TO US BY SENIOR MAURITANIAN OFFICIALS, VOA MAY WISH TO TAKE OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST INTERVIEW. SHINN

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